Iowa Licensing - Sign Language Interpreters and Transliterators

American Sign Language (ASL) and Signing Exact English (SEE) Examinations

<u>Licensing Purpose</u>: "For protecting the health and safety of the public through establishing standards and enforcing regulations of interpreters for the deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing impaired..." (SF 2298-80th General Assembly)

Examination Purpose: Protect the public by evaluating licensure applicant skills to ensure individuals receiving a license to practice meet minimum competency standards.

Examination Requirements:

• Evaluate minimum competency by ensuring what is being spoken and signed is correctly relayed by the sign language interpreter. For each type of language or system it is important to evaluate fluency consistent with the standards established for the use of that language or system. In the case of the standards for SEE, the person who developed SEE emphasized the importance of using ASL vocabulary in English word order as well as incorporating ASL classifiers, nonmanual markers, etc. ¹ Classifiers are handshapes used to show movement, location, and appearance. ² Nonmanual markers are the various facial expressions, head tilts, shoulder raises, mouthing, and similar signals that are added to hand signs to create meaning. ³

Approved Examinations: The Board approved examinations include examinations for both ASL and SEE (with ASL components) that are validated to be psychometrically sound. There is no known psychometrically sound examination that tests fluency in SEE without ASL components.

American Sign Language and Signing Exact English Relationship:

- American Sign Language is considered a true language containing its own standardized grammar, syntax and idioms. As a visual language it also utilizes standardized sign prosody, space, facial expressions, etc. to augment the message transference.
- Signing Exact English (SEE or SEE II) is considered a signing system developed to enhance the learning of the English language. SEE was developed using ASL vocabulary as its foundation however "sentence structure, the idioms, the verb endings, etc. are taken from English." It [SEE] is incomprehensible without sign prosody, space, facial expression, etc. [characteristics derived from ASL]." 5

References:

- 1 Jeanne Glidden Prickett, EdD, Superintendent, Iowa School for the Deaf, email dated May 5, 2011.
- 2 Interpreter Preparation Program at John A. Logan College, www.jalc.edu/ipp/Classifiers/
- 3 © 2004, www.Lifeprint.com. Adapted by permission.
- 4 http://www.modernsignspress.com/faq.htm
- 5 Brenda Schick, Ph.D., Professor and Coordinator, Graduate Studies, Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences, University of Colorado.